

June 20, 2011 – 10:00 A.M. – DRAINAGE BOARD MEETING – Newton County Government Center

The Newton County Drainage Board met on June 20, 2011 at 10:00 A.M. in the Newton County Government Center. Present were Board Members Chr. Russell Collins, James Pistello and Tim Drenth; Surveyor Chris Knochel; County Engineer Larry Holderly; Secretary Debra Honn. The meeting was opened by Russ.

Minutes – May 16, 2011 – Signed

Minutes – June 6, 2011 – Jim made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 6th meeting with a second from Tim. Motion carried.

Hibler System Survey Contract – Chris mentioned that the contract needs to be signed for this project; however the funding needs to be there first. Jim made the motion to table the Hibler System Survey Contract until the funding is in place with a second from Tim. Motion carried.

General Drain Improvement Fund – Leann Sale from the Auditor's Office reported that there is currently \$120,217.61 in the GDIF and that Drain Maintenance has a current balance of \$766,184.32 after Spring Tax Settlements have been added. Therefore we are O.K. right now in GDIF; however we need more money in the fund to operate. It was decided there would be a meeting with Auditor Sharon Dewing on Tuesday, June 21st at 9:00 AM to discuss the \$100,000 that was approved by the Council in 2010, placed in the Contractual Services and never used due to miscommunication.

Alternative Funding – Legal Fees – Jim stated that the additional request in the amount of \$4,000 for legal fees was approved at the Council Meeting earlier the same morning. Chris asked if we want to continue to pay legal fees out of County General or use the Landfill Fund. Jim said he would suggest Landfill as he wants to do everything we can to keep the taxes down. Jim questioned if we can pay legal fees out of GDIF to which Chris answered that he had checked with Dan Blaney and drains that are being petitioned can have the legal fees placed against the GDIP. The board advised Chris to continue checking to see if the legal fees could go against the individual drains in Drainage Maintenance and/or General Drain Improvement Fund.

Alternative Funding – Inspector – Another thing Chris mentioned was finding a job for an inspector to assess the conditions of the ditches and drains. The drains are in such major disrepair that if an inspector could get down and inspect them routinely then Chris would like to think that some of the problems could be avoided if they were handled like some of the ditches in the southern end. At this time, the southern landowners come to Chris when they have a problem. Jim is not for sending an inspector out to do whatever for "x" number of dollars a year and eating up a \$20,000 per year contract. Who is to pay for it? Chris is of the opinion that what is currently being used is not working and this is one way of assuring an alternative. Russ was unclear of what the job description would be to which Chris responded that would have to be defined. Tim suggested we consider it in 20 years since "we are now on it" in the northern end. Jim responded that we don't have the money. Audrey of the NCHD asked who currently inspects the ditches and drains to which it was stated that it falls under the surveyors responsibilities.

Private Drain Initiative – Chris stated he had been working with Jill of the Health Department and that she has been calling Chris about issues in subdivisions and asking if they are regulated drains. Chris thinks if a private drain is obstructed then he can address it under the obstructed drain law I.C. 36-9-27.4. If we are going to continue to work on the private drains that are obstructed which we are currently doing, Chris asked if we want to add some specialized equipment such as mini-hoes and mini- excavators along with a crew of a couple men to act faster than going through the drainage board. As long as the subdivisions have regulated drains we are in good shape. Chris was asking for consideration, if we are going to have the initiative to work on private drains, that we have the men and equipment in place in order to expedite the completion in a limited time. We currently have 3-4 dependable contractors that do steady work. Jim thinks we do well the way we do it. Every contractor Tim has talked to (3 right now) is looking for work and that is in addition to the ones Chris uses. Instead of securing a crew & equipment we need to work harder at getting the ditches regulated and assessed.

Other Matters – We need to get some more money in the GDIF. Deb mentioned that the motion carried at the meeting in April to ask for \$300,000 to which the board agreed we need to do that and get on the agenda with it next month. Since there was no more business, Jim made the motion to adjourn with a second from Tim. Motion carried.